

Haftarah Summary

Rabbi Aron Tandler

This week's Haftarah continues the theme of Hashem's manifest presence within nature and our selection as the Chosen People. The opening verses, taken from the end of Yishaya Chap. 40, directly attribute strength and success to belief in Hashem. "But those who put their hope in Hashem shall renew their vigor...they shall run and not weary...." (40:31)

Hashem's eternity in relation to all generations is established, "...I am first, and with the last ones I am He." (41:4) and it therefore makes sense to trust Hashem. This realization mirrors Avraham's quest for understanding. Natures inherent consistency and order revealed itself to Avraham as absolute proof of a Creator who cares for His creations. "...he says of the cement, "It is good," and he strengthened it with nails that it should not move." (41:7)

With the conviction of certainty and truth, Avraham embraces G-d as a true servant. Hashem, in return, bestows upon him the singular accolade as the one "who loved me". In all of the Tanach, only Avraham is referred to in this manner. To love Hashem means to trust Hashem, and Avraham trusted Hashem more completely than anyone else. In merit for his devotion, Hashem promises to protect his children from the onslaught of the other nations. As all things are put into perspective, we realize that our nation's greatness and praise is but a

Minyan Schedule	
Erev Shabbat Parashat Lech L'cha	
Kabbalat Shabbat	6.30 pm
Candle lighting 23/10/15	6.56 pm

Shabbat Parashat Lech L'cha	
Shacharit 24/10/15	9.15 am
Children's Service	10.00 am
Mincha (Mizrachi)	6.53 pm
Shabbat ends	7.53 pm

Erev Shabbat Parashat Vayera	
Kabbalat Shabbat	6.30 pm
Candle lighting 30/10/15	7.02 pm

Announcements

Kiddush is sponsored by

Kylie and David Skalicky

in honour of

Joshua's first birthday

Shabbat Project

Mincha and Seudat Shlishit

**3.30 pm 80 Boronia Rd,
Bellevue Hill**

(just outside the eruv)

reflection of Hashem's greatness. (41:16) *Rabbi Aron Tandler and torah.org.*

Or Chadash

קהילת אור חדש

WEEKLY BULLETIN

Shabbat Parashat Lech L'cha
11 Cheshvan 5776; 24 October, 2015
Shabbat Torah reading: Stone Chumash
page 54, and Haftarah page 1133.

President Jonathan Erlich
Rabbi-in-residence Rabbi Franklin
Dvrei Torah Rabbi Franklin

Being True

Rabbi Marc D. Angel

Rabbi Harold Kushnertold a story of a man who stopped attending his usual synagogue and was now frequenting another minyan. One day he happened to meet the rabbi of his previous synagogue, and the rabbi asked him where he was praying these days. The man answered: "I am praying at a small minyan led by Rabbi Cohen." The rabbi was stunned. "Why would you want to pray there with that rabbi. I am a much better orator, I am more famous, I have a much larger following." The man replied: "Yes, but in my new synagogue the rabbi has taught me to read minds." The rabbi was surprised. "Alright, then, read my mind."

The man said: "You are thinking of the verse in Psalms, I have set the Lord before me at all times." "You are wrong," said the rabbi, "I was not thinking about that verse at all." The man replied: "Yes, I knew that, and that's why I've moved to the other synagogue. The rabbi there is always thinking of this verse."

Indeed, an authentically religious person is always thinking of this verse, either directly or in the back of his mind. Such an individual lives in the presence of God, conducts himself with modesty and propriety. The Rabbi Cohen of the story was genuine; he was a spiritual person seeking to live a godly life.

The other rabbi in the story was "successful." He had a large congregation and external signs of prestige. But he lacked the essential



ingredient of being authentically religious: he did not have the Lord before him at all times. He was busy trying to make himself popular, get his name into the newspapers, rub elbows with celebrities. Even when he prayed, his mind was not on God, but on how he could advance himself in the world.

In this week's parasha, we read about the early career of Abraham. The Torah does not describe Abraham as a great orator or statesman. Rather, Abraham is one who walks before God, in the presence of God. God refers to Abraham as "ohavi," My friend (Isaiah 41:8). Friendship implies a loving mutual relationship, loyalty, trustworthiness. Jewish tradition identifies Abraham with the quality of compassion (hesed), meaning that he really cared not only for God but for people. He took the time to speak with "not at" others. More importantly, he took the time to listen to others. He was not a self-aggrandizing politician or a back-slapping smooth salesman.

Others in Abraham's time may have been mightier, more popular, and wealthier. But God chose Abraham because Abraham was true. Abraham was the one who would become "father of a multitude of nations." Abraham was the one who would ultimately

prevail in bringing the world closer to God and closer to godliness. Our goal should be to set the Lord before us at all times and to associate with others who strive to do likewise. Life is too important to waste by clinging to falseness and vanity. *Rabbi Marc. D. Angel and the Institute of Jewish Ideas and Ideals.*

The Founders of Our People

Rabbi Berel Wein

The main character described in this week's Torah reading is naturally Noach himself. I think that the Torah wishes to illustrate, through Noach's personality and his reactions to the impending disaster and to the world afterwards - the challenges of being a survivor. Everyone who has ever survived a serious challenge or tragedy replays in one's mind what might have been done differently, and whether the tragedy could somehow have been averted. There is always, as well, that element of guilt which every survivor carries with him or her.

Noach had ample warning as to the arrival of the flood, a flood that would destroy civilization as he knew it. There are different opinions

in the commentaries to the Torah as to whether Noach really tried to save his surrounding neighbors or whether he was mainly passive, hoping that somehow by publicly building the Ark they would get the message. Whatever opinion we adopt, it is obvious that Noach was unsuccessful in saving his generation from destruction. That stark fact must have undoubtedly weighed very heavily on Noach in the aftermath of the flood. It explains his superficially strange behavior - planting a vineyard, becoming drunk and being sexually abused, but it does not excuse it. Post-traumatic syndrome is today recognized as a medical disease - a psychological and physical problem.

Almost all servicemen who were engaged in actual combat suffer from it in one way or another. There are grief counselors to help people recover after personal tragedies in their families. But Noach was all alone in the world and there was no one to help him cope with his own survival syndrome.

Coping with sad and difficult events is ostensibly the true measure of a person and of life itself. It is perhaps what the Mishna meant when it described the ten trials of our father Avraham "and he withstood them all." It was not only the trials that made him great but rather the fact that after so many trials he still stood tall and resolute, faithful and graciously kind to the end.

Avraham was also a survivor but his method of overcoming the survival syndrome was far different from that of Noach. This

Or Chadash is a friendly community. We hold tuneful participatory services, in the nusach Ashkenaz tradition, on Shabbat and Yom Tov. Focusing on personal growth, we welcome all, from small children to older men and women, of all levels of observance.

We have operated since 1995. During the year we arrange special activities including: learning, shiur/lecture series and social events.

dichotomy was clearly seen in the past generation when the survivors of the Holocaust made choices regarding their future lives after their liberation. All of them were affected by the horrors they witnessed and in fact endured. Yet their choices as how to pursue life once more became the true mettle of their existence and personality.

Choosing life, family, faith and entrepreneurial, social and national productivity was, for many a survivor, the road to rehabilitation and normalcy. The past was never forgotten and the events could never be erased, but rebuilding life took precedence over all other factors. Adam and Noach both could not overcome the tragedies that previously engulfed them. They became reclusive and lost their drive for leadership and their ability to inspire others. By so doing, they compounded the tragedies that overtook them and forfeited the opportunity to forge an eternal people that would somehow be able to rise above all calamities and fulfill its historic mission. *Rabbi Berel Wein and torah.org.*

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